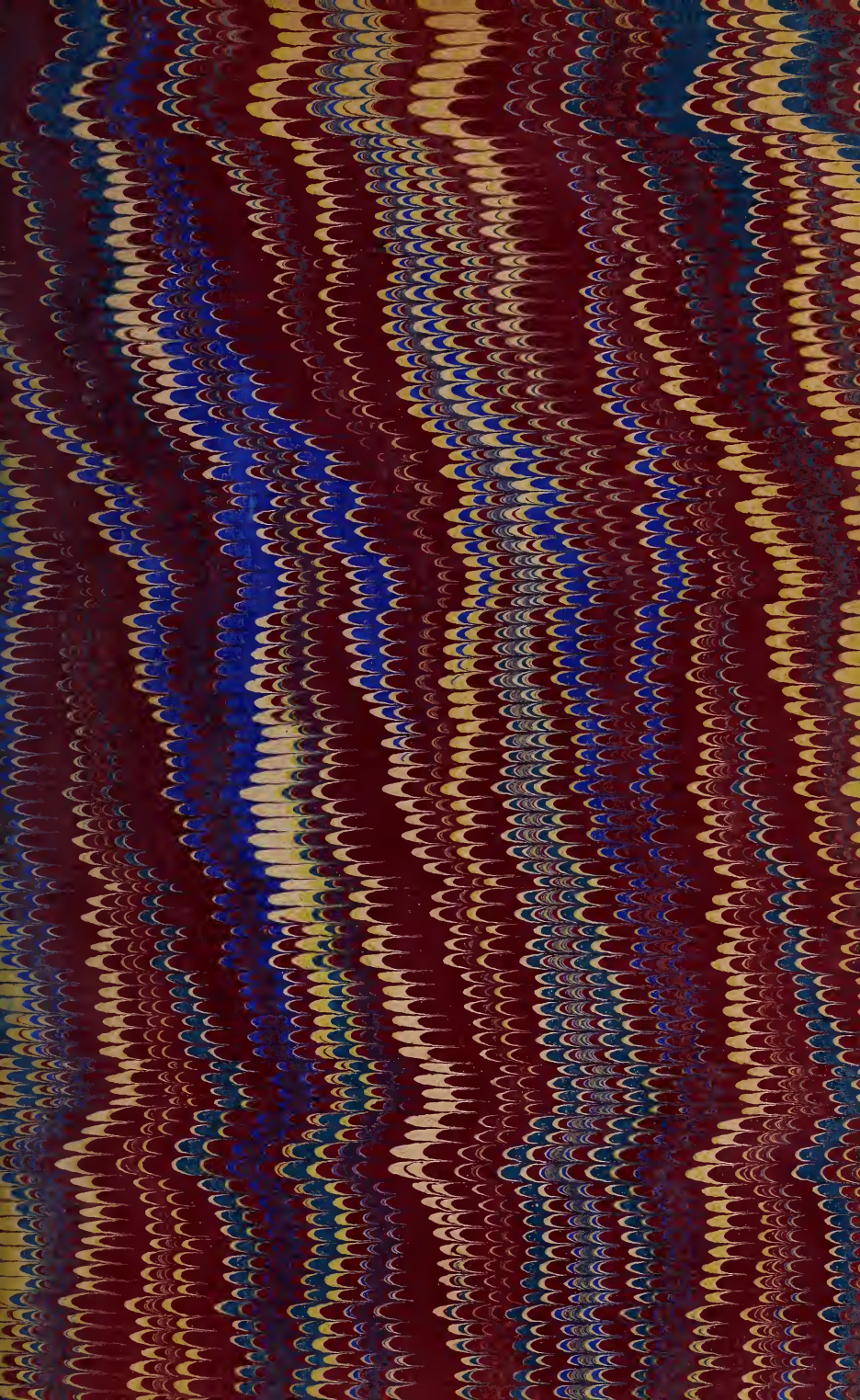


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A VISION

AND A

— VOICE —

FROM

TWO WORLDS.



Very Truly Yours
Mary E. Burns

A VISION

—AND A—

Voice From 

 Two Worlds

BEING THE EXPERIENCE OF

MARY E. BURNS,

AS RELATED BY HERSELF.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

REV. OTHO F. BARTHOLOW.

*"I knew a man in Christ....whether in the body, I cannot tell,
or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth.*

*How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable
words"....*



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MRS. MARY E. BURNS,
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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INTRODUCTION.



RELIGIOUS experience seeks every possible avenue of expression.—It voices itself in music, architecture, sculpturing, painting and literature. In each the proportions have been so vast and the forms so beautiful that it would seem there was little to be added or desired. The narrative of this little book does not claim or aspire to do either—it is simply an attempt to voice in words an experience most real, unique and lasting.

Its aim is the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom—the eternal good of the devout reader.

All, who in the past years have known of the Christian life of the author, will understand, without introduction, the motive and the object of her unpretentious effort; will realize that it is the truth adapting itself to another of the myriads of forms in which it is the pleasure of the Father it be revealed.

To the King be the glory.

OTHO F. BARTHOLOW.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

CHAPTER I.

DESIRE TO RELATE MY EXPERIENCE—BELIEVE GOD
WILL BE HONORED BY SO DOING.

“I was a wandering sheep,
I did not love the fold;
I did not love my Shepherd’s voice,
I would not be controlled.”

THE HISTORY I here relate is brief, yet I very much desire to make it public; it stands connected with the most interesting and thrilling scenes of my life. Some may read it and be benefitted by so doing. I desire the good of others. To help any along the way that leads to the better land is the highest ambition of my life. Like one of old, I can truly say, “Come unto me, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.” I desire to make known, in some degree, the amazing love of Christ, to myself manifested. Not to do so would be upon my part base ingratitude.

My life has been a checkered one. To go back upon its history is not my present purpose; it would not prove of much interest or profit to the reader. I never indulged in any thing immoral; I always believed in and revered the name of God. I always respected and loved the house of God.

At the age of fourteen, through the earnest persuasion of a friend when dying, I joined the Methodist Church. As a member I continued for many years,

endeavoring not only to conform to the outward requirements of the same, but also to be religious; and, like thousands, I felt a degree of satisfaction in so doing. I attended the various means of grace, I sought to quiet my conscience by a faithful adherence to all its outward forms and ceremonies. I often measured myself by those belonging to the church, who, claiming to be pious and devoted, whose short-comings I saw, led me to believe I was good, or at least as good as they. Thus I lived for a number of years, having "the form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof."



CHAPTER II.

MARRIAGE—BIRTH—DEATH—WIDOWHOOD.

“He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind.”

AT the age of twenty-one I was married and had a pleasant home for myself. Like thousands, who link their destinies with another, mine seemed bright and hopeful. I anticipated no trouble or sorrow. To add to the joy of my home there came to bless us a sweet babe, a daughter. As yet, no cloud had overshadowed our home, nor did I expect any. But how mistaken! I was soon to enter the valley of sorrow. My husband was taken from me; the shadow of death fell upon my household. My dear child was fatherless, and I was a widow. In my loneliness, more than ever, my heart clung to my child. I had not yet learned to look for help and comfort from the true source. She was my only comfort, my all.

Three years later I again married, and soon after came to Brooklyn, where we settled. I very soon began to attend religious services regularly, but did not become a member. The affairs of life went on smoothly for three years more, when a greater sorrow than I had ever experienced fell upon me. My dearest child, now eight years of age, who had woven herself deeply in my heart's affection, was taken seriously ill. I prayed for her life, I asked God that I might have her spared to

me; but for reasons that He knew and I did not, she was taken from me, and my heart seemed broken. I feared I should sink under the blow.

The minister who attended her funeral, and who often visited me, seemed to enter into sympathy with me in my bereavement, and pointed my stricken heart to the only source of comfort. He said, "This is a call that you must not refuse. His voice to you in your sorrow is 'Daughter, give me thy heart.'" He tenderly pointed me to that heavenly home, where the dear ones had gone. "Give yourself fully to Him, become his child, and you will again meet in that home that knows no parting."

Stricken in heart I attended the Revival Services held in the Johnson Street M. E. Church. It was there I yielded myself fully to the Lord, to be saved in his own way. I did not seek in vain. The loving voice was applied to my poor heart. "Daughter, thy sins are all forgiven; go, and sin no more."

I now believe, and have ever felt, my conversion was sound and genuine. I united myself with the church and went forward in all its privileges. I was conscious of God's favor and smiles; duty was a delight and privilege. This state continued for several years. I had no thought of ever turning aside, or losing my love for the dear Master who had done so much for me.

It is with a degree of sadness, that I now relate how I lost the conscious sense of God's abiding love and favor. Troubles of a domestic character came to me. I was not equal to the pressure. I looked away from the Master and only to the waves and storm; then, like Peter, I began to sink. Losing my conscious enjoyment, I again lapsed into formality. I attended church as before, but it was not from a love to the

Master, but rather to silence an accusing conscience. I now sought to supply the demands and longings of my soul by worldly pleasures. I attended parties and oftentimes went to the theatre. This was my sad and perilous condition. My Father saw the backslidings of his child and sought to restore me to his fold again, saying to me, "Return unto me and I will return unto you." And it required deep and sad chastenings to bring this about, to which we may refer in the following chapter.



CHAPTER III.

SUDDEN ILLNESS—STORM TOSSED—“SHALL I DIE TO-NIGHT?”

“I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.”

IN the year 1886, upon the fourth day of the month, it pleased God to visit me with a severe illness. I was suddenly stricken down; very soon my symptoms became of the most alarming character. A physician was at once summoned, who coming, and after an examination, pronounced my case a hopeless one. Imagine, if one can, what my feelings were when he declared: “She is too far gone, and may die to-night.” My disease was of such virulent form as no hope was entertained of my recovery.

My friends urged him to do what he could; he said, “I will try, but I have no hope.” All this conversation I heard, though not intended for my ears. Quick as a lightening’s flash, these thoughts ran through my mind, “Suppose this night is to be your last on earth?” Then came deep remorse of the past, my base ingratitude; it stung my soul as with a deadly sting. A poor wretched sinner, and death, and a dread eternity staring me in the face, “May die to-night!” still ringing through the chambers of my soul. O! that fearful night! Never can I forget it. Who can understand the horror of a poor, sinful, immortal soul, hovering over the dark precipice, ready to fall therein? The Holy Spirit grieved—God angry, and heaven lost.

I remembered dear ones whom I had promised to meet in the better land ; I thought of an awful hell—of a soul lost, and it seemed as if I already heard the howling of that storm that beats upon lost souls, doomed and damned. Such a fearful tide broke upon my mind, that reason tottered, and fell. As daylight broke, and its first faint light came into my window, it found me wild, and irrational. By noon-time, reason dethroned, returned, and I was capable of taking in the situation again. My first rational thought was, as I saw the light of day, “The night has passed, and the day has dawned, and I am yet alive.” O God ! there is yet hope in my case ! Then, moved by the thoughts of mercy, I began to pray—I pleaded the merits of my dear Redeemer, whose love I had slighted, I asked pardon for the past sins of omission, and commission.

While thus earnestly pleading, a “VISION” seemed to open before me. “I saw in the distance a hill, upon the top there was a very high cross ; while around its base a terrible storm raged. As I looked, I saw upon the top of the cross, a roll, which appeared like paper ; just close at hand there stood an Angel, whose duty it was to unroll the paper ; as this was being done, I could plainly see the writing upon the scroll, and it came forcibly to my mind, “These are the sins of your past life.” For two days, and nights, I watched and read, as the Angel continued to unroll it. Not a moment of sleep came to my weary eyes. On the morning of the third day I became exhausted, I could look no longer. Closing my eyes, I cried out : “Blessed Lord, I cannot atone for the past, O let it be blotted out, and let me live only for Thee, for the time to come.” Scarcely had I uttered the last word, when a distinct wave of blood passed over the cross, hiding it

entirely from my sight. While gazing in rapture upon the blood, the Saviour appeared on its surface ; his Person was glorious to look upon ; in his hand he held a beautiful banner, which he waved over the blood, saying, "Thou art free !" If I had a thousand tongues, I could not tell the world, the light and joy that filled my soul. I shouted, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will to men !" I sang and prayed, and gave vent to my feelings with shouts, and praises. The friends thought I had become deranged, and gone mad, and hastily called in the physician. I told him what had happened, he seemed to understand, but said "I was very weak, and was endangering my life by talking ; my friends admonished me, and desired I should desist ; I said, "let me talk on, I am not afraid to die now ! yes, I prefer death to life, as I shall now be with Christ." My dear son, of whom I have made no mention, the only child of my second marriage, was sent for, he quickly came to my bedside ; while there he became overcome with grief, supposing I was dying ; he begged piteously, "O my dear mother, don't die ? live for my sake." Calmly I sank into a sweet, quiet sleep ; but the cross—the blood, the Saviour were still before me ; I seemed to be with him.

After a time I awoke, and O ! how refreshed. I looked for the objects that had filled my being with such rapture, but to my sorrow and disappointment, they had disappeared. In a simple, child-like manner, I cried out, "Dear loving Lord, why hast thou left me ? O come back, again !" I still continued to look in the direction where I had beheld the Saviour, upon closing my eyes the sweet vision, changed a little, appeared again. There was the blessed cross, while a beautiful

Angel reclined upon it, his appearance was glorious indeed ; his raiment was white, and glistening like the sun. As he looked upon me he lovingly smiled ; I said, " O, do not leave me ; " for three days this beautiful sight remained before me. When I would fall asleep, I would say, " O do not leave me." When I awaked, my thoughts would be to see if he were yet there ; an overflowing gratitude seemed to fill my soul, and often I would say, " how good and kind you are to watch over the bed of a poor wretched one like me." Once during the second night I awoke and thought the Angel had departed, but looking a little closer, I saw him lying at the bottom of the cross, with his arms around it.

But the beautiful, celestial vision was to change. In what followed, the contrast was very great ; beyond my feeble powers to describe.



CHAPTER IV.

AN AWFUL VISION.—GIVEN INTO THE HANDS OF SATAN.

“ And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he (Job) is in thine hand ; but save his life.”

UPON the evening of the third day, while continuing to enjoy the sight of the blessed cross, and the Angel reclining at its base, there appeared to me another Being, whom at once I knew, though no voice spoke his name, his whole form was horrible to behold ! with piercing eyes he looked at me, I knew him to be the Devil. Turning to the Angel, who still remained, he said : “ How watchful, and mindful you are of this person ; give me power over her for a season.”

Some other words were said which I failed to understand. The Angel said, “ I will give you power over her for three days, but, you must not lay a finger upon her, nor do her any harm.” Immediately to my great sorrow the Angel disappeared, and I was left alone with the Devil. There was yet one thing that gave me comfort. Although the Angel was gone, I was still conscious of his presence, and it was a comfort to me to know that after three days I should see him again ; but what a great sorrow, combined with fear and horror, I felt, upon being left alone with this horrible being. He turned to me and commanded me to follow him;

doing so, in a little while I found myself in a place that language cannot describe, but I knew at once it was the abode of the lost and damned.

In looking around, I was surprised to see no literal fire there! I said "We are taught on earth that hell is a dark, bottomless pit, burning with fire and brimstone; but here I see none." As I gazed upon the awful scene, it came to me that the element of fire is not needed to make wretchedness and woe complete. I cried out "Dear Lord, let me leave this awful place!" Immediately there came a thought of comfort to my feelings; I heard a voice saying to me, "Do not fear, it is only for three days;" while I seemed to hear the voice of the Angel saying, "Be of good cheer, I will not leave you comfortless." Then the fiend would whisper horrible thoughts and wicked suggestions—temptations to sin.

I was conscious of a power to resist his wiles. I reminded him I belonged, soul and body, to the Lord. And moreover, I should leave him and his dismal abode. At the end of the three days he turned upon me a fiendish look I cannot describe.

How strange it appeared to me that the Angel, whom I could not see, conversed with me all the while. "This that you now see," he said, "is *Chaos*." It appeared as a mass of confusion; its fumes and odor were stifling, even to suffocation; darkness reigned, save a faint, dim torchlight; no sun shone there; while on either hand the groans and howling of the lost were awful, beyond measure. Among the multitudes I saw none sitting. They were wandering to and fro in groups—their number seemed to be countless—as far as my eye could reach was one surging mass, giving vent to horrible imprecations and blasphemies. Upon

the countenance of all there was no ray of hope to be seen ; no smile, but grim, dark despair !

I wondered that the Devil paid no attention to anyone, not even noticing them for a moment.

How different I thought with God and his people. What words of cheer and comfort does he impart.

These miserable wretches enticed to commit sin, led by him to this dark abode, then left. The ruin of souls is his only object. I had expected the lost would resume the avocations here they followed on the earth, but I could see nothing going on, except they appeared to be planning some devilish scheme and deploring their lost condition in language no pen can write, or tongue describe. To this day, when the memory of their ruined condition comes upon me, it creates a sickening sensation, and I have to make use of every effort to shut it out of my memory. I wish here to say, when my thoughts recur to the scene, they are as vivid and real as the life and scenes of the city in which I reside.

The morning of the third day dawned, the time when I was to be liberated from the presence and thralldom of Satan. As I journeyed along, the path seemed to be growing more and more rugged, yet the evil one was constantly by my side, taunting me about the past. It was with the greatest difficulty I could drag myself along. Suddenly, I felt a change, the air began to grow cold, a chilling sensation came upon me ; it continued until I had arrived at the top of a very high hill, covered with snow and ice. I wondered what the hill was called ; a voice came to me, "This is the Hill of *Desolation*." From this moment the Devil disappeared and I was left alone.

CHAPTER V.

LEAVING THE "HILL DESOLATION."—BLESSED RETURN OF THE ANGEL.—A VIEW OF THE HEAVENLY CITY.

"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. . . . And God shall wipe all tears from their eyes."

THE closing of the last chapter found me upon the "Hill Desolation," and alone. The chill of the icy atmosphere seemed to penetrate to my very heart. I could not resist nor overcome its influence. I became exhausted and I fell to the ground. In this condition I cried out: "O Lord, am I to die here alone?" Suddenly, I heard a voice speaking to me: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," and a hand gently raised me up. As I stood upon my feet, I looked, and to my surprise and joy, there stood before me again the Angel. He smiled, and reaching out his hand, said, "Follow me." I did so. Almost immediately the scene changed; the rough and rugged way became smooth. And even the intense cold was gone, and a soft, balmy, fragrant atmosphere took its place. The ragged, tattered garments I had worn were replaced by a robe, beautifully white. The scene that met my gaze from every direction was beyond description; we walked through green fields, with flowers blooming on every side. At length we came to a gate, which for splendor dazzled my

eyes; it stood ajar. I hastened to enter, but my Angelic guide placed his hand upon my shoulders, and said, "Not yet." O, how disappointed I felt! I said, "O, let me enter. I have dear friends within. A father, mother, sisters, and brothers; and more than all, I have a precious child there. O, do not detain me!" "Yes," he replied, "I know it all. Yet thou hast a child on earth whose salvation is of the greatest importance; go back again to earth and labor for this, so that when thou returnest thou mayest have two, instead of one."

The thought was intensely interesting. "O yes," I said, "that will be glorious to see them and hear them say, 'Here comes our dear mother. We greet and welcome you.'" With this thought before me, I felt reconciled to return to earth again. Still, I stood gazing with rapture and awe through the open gate, while the most seraphic music and singing floated through the air and fell upon my ravished ear.

For a little while I was permitted to look in the distance. I saw a beautiful stream of water, clear as crystal, gently flowing, and on its banks were embowered the richest foliage. "There," said the Angel, "is where the saints bathe their weary feet, after traveling over life's rough journey. On the banks they sit and talk of their wonderful salvation and deliverance from the world and sin. "Now," said he, "you must return to earth again, and I charge you not to fail to declare all you have felt, seen and heard."

"Before you leave me, will you tell me about my relatives who have died? Are they saved?"

"Yes," said he, "there is but one exception." The name he gave me. The one I called to mind as a skeptic, who did not believe in a God.

The Angel and myself walked on in silence. I cannot describe the scenes through which he brought me. My feet seemed not to touch the earth; a strange, gravitating power lifted me up and along. Coming to a beautiful hill covered with verdure, we paused. He commanded me to kneel, saying to me "You will now receive a sanctified blessing, ere you return to earth."

I prostrated myself at his feet; while kneeling there I thrice distinctly felt a wave pass over my soul. I felt this to be the blood of cleansing. As the third one came I cried out:

"'Tis done, the great transaction's done.

I am my Lord's and he is mine.

He drew me, and I followed on,

Charmed to confess the voice divine."

I desire here to say I had not believed in sanctification. I had said there is no such thing on earth, but now, oh, what a change had come upon me; I arose so happy, so clean, and cried out "Washed in the blood of the Lamb." "How strange," I said to the Angel, "that blood should make white." "Yes," he replied, "but only the blood of Jesus." Journeying along we came to a river, whose waters were pure as crystal; there at the shore was a boat, and at each end sat an angel, with folded wings. Then it came to me, "This boat is to take you back to earth again." How sorry I was to leave my guide, in whose company I had enjoyed so much. He said to me, "Be of good cheer, we shall meet again; till then see that you fail not to tell all you have seen and heard."

Then gently placing me in the boat, I left the shore. As we glided down the stream, a heavenly chorus of voices broke forth in song.

“ To our bountiful Father above,
We will now offer the tribute of praise.”

While this song seemed to come from heaven, there appeared to come up from the earth side, to which we were tending, voices which took up the chorus and sang:

“ In the sweet by and by
We shall meet on that beautiful shore.”

And the song of heaven and earth met, and sweetly blended. Thus I again reached the earthly shore, and as I was leaving the boat and the river I sang:

“ Adieu ! vain world, adieu !
I can no longer stay with you.
My glittering crown appears in view.”

It was in this heavenly frame of transport that I awoke to earth again, and I found myself back in the room where I was taken ill.

The transition was so great that I commenced to weep, and I sighed “ Oh, why did I come back to earth again ? ” I was so happy. My son, now nineteen years of age, was standing by my bed. I turned to him and said, “ My dear child, they have sent me back from Heaven to help you to Jesus, to work for your salvation.” He seemed deeply affected. In a few days he came to me, looking anxious and troubled. I asked him the cause ; he replied, “ I have had a terrible dream.” He related it to me. He thought he was being taken to the abode of darkness, but crying to Jesus, he said, “ Yes, Jesus did help me.”

“ Oh, mother, I wish I could get some other employment ; I would gladly leave the stage ; ” for that was his occupation.

CHAPTER VI.

“ Write the vision, and make it plain—that he may run that readeth.”

BEING so deeply impressed, as soon as I recovered strength I commenced to write the things shown me by both Demon and Angel; after recording thus far I was tempted to desist. Suppose you were to tell of this revelation, would you be believed? Would anyone receive your testimony? Would you not be laughed at, as one telling the vagaries of a disordered brain? These thoughts deterred me, and for five years following, I tried to forget it, but I could not. The scenes described, were photographed upon my brain and soul. The charge given me by the Angel “ not to fail to declare the vision,” laid upon my mind as a heavy burden, every sermon I listened to, seemed to emphasize the duty required and the promise made. In a dream I was warned that if I failed, my arm would perish, and at another time, in the dreams upon my bed, I heard these words, as in thunder tones, “ Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.” I was brought to feel the great sin of neglect, and before the Lord, I promised to do what I had been bidden, I said sometime during this year I will surely finish writing the “ Vision ;” but I thoughtlessly allowed the year to pass, with nothing done, save writing to a friend concerning the matter, who encouraged me, by saying “ You ought to finish it.”

On New Year's Eve I attended Watch-night services at Johnson St. M. E. Church. To me it was a wonderful meeting, and upon others the Spirit was poured out from on high. It was here, while enjoying such an overshadowing of the Divine presence, there was renewed strongly, the importance of fulfilling my vow, to write—publish and declare the strange, yet wonderful things the Lord had revealed to me. Meanwhile there came also in my mind a sense of my neglect, and disobedience. To move me more fully, it seemed necessary that some gentle discipline was needed, that my heavenly Father saw best to administer. As I returned from the Watch-night services, and had reached my home, I was seized by severe, excruciating pain, which continued for twelve days without intermission. Under this discipline of suffering, I asked the Lord to give me relief, and then solemnly renewed my promise to obey his command, as revealed to me. My dear Lord heard my prayer, accepted the covenant again renewed, and not only relieved my pain, but gave me strength to arise from my bed, and begin the work, unfinished. It was for this, and to labor for the salvation of my Son, that I returned from the very gate of heaven, bearing in mind the promise made me by the Angel, that my two children would be there in due time to welcome me within those pearly gates.

CHAPTER VII.

SUDDEN AND STARTLING INTELLIGENCE—THE LAST LOVED ONE GONE.

“ Verily, thou art a God that hideth thyself.”

“ What I do now thou knowest not, but thou shalt know hereafter.”

THE RECORD I make in this chapter is of the saddest experience of my life. After a visit out West, where my son was at that time employed, the physician thought a change of climate would be beneficial to me, as I had poor health. Accordingly, I left the city and came on to Brooklyn, leaving my son there. I felt very sad at leaving him alone in a great city. In less than a year after he came to see me, spending two weeks. While with me he often spoke of that dream. He said he had told it to others. “ I shall never forget,” he said, “ the beautiful face of Jesus.” We separated, he returning to his home. I often received letters from him, seldom writing; but he would ask me to pray for him, and often would write, “ I want to become a Christian some day.” O, that I had been more in earnest about his salvation. This thought often comes upon me with overwhelming force. One year and a half, when I was expecting him home again, I received a telegram from Columbus, Ohio, saying “ Your son is dead.” He was indisposed, a physician was called, who administered a powerful drug, that put him to sleep, from which he never again awoke. He died the next day without returning to consciousness.

The news well nigh broke my heart. He was my only child ; he was my all. I will try to bear the burden of an aching heart until I reach the land where there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor tears. What a comfort and consolation it would be to me if I only knew he was saved ; how it would soothe my journey through this mortal life. Yet I cling to the promise made me by the Angel, that on my return I should have the two children to greet me ; but I also call to mind what more he spoke to me, "You will return and labor for his salvation."

To any who may read this sorrowful story, if you have in your home a child whose greatest good you would desire, whose salvation is of more importance than all the wealth of the universe, let a sad, bereaved mother speak to you. "Whatsoever thy hands find to do, do it with thy might." Let no opportunity pass to teach, to warn them ; do not cease your efforts until they are brought to the fold of the great Shepherd. Be kind, tender and loving to them ; hold them as much, and as long as possible, under your own maternal care. Pray for them, and often with them. Live closely to Christ yourself, that following you, they may be saved and that you may be saved the unutterable sorrow that has fallen upon my own heart, though "too late." O, that I had been true and faithful to my child !

And now my task is nearly completed. Too long have I delayed its writing. My neglect has cost me discipline and sorrow, but I trust God will accept the fulfilment of the promise made long since.

With my earnest prayers shall this little booklet go forth, bearing a message from two worlds. Especially to young men would I, who have been a mother, crave a Father's blessing upon this, my feeble effort.

I cannot close without bearing testimony to His infinite love and goodness to me. How kindly he has led me into paths I knew not ; when my heart has been overwhelmed within me, then he has led me to the "Rock that is higher than I." When I have been cast down and despondent, I have heard a whisper in my soul, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him."

I am reminded of some lines that came to me in a dream, a few days after the vision ; they were new and strange to me, I had never heard them before.

I remembered a few lines only. I spoke to a friend about them, and desired him to find them for me if possible. After a time he found them. They are so beautiful, and they seemed to touch so many points in my experience that I have adopted them as my own, and here give them to the dear reader :

I.

"The Master stood in His garden,
Among the lilies so fair ;
Which his own right hand had planted,
And trained with tenderest care.
He looked at their snowy blossoms,
And marked with observant eye
That his flowers were sadly drooping,
For their leaves were parched and dry."

II.

"My lilies have need to be watered,
The heavenly Master said ;
Wherein shall I draw it for them,
And raise each drooping head ?
Close, close to his feet, on the pathway,
All empty, and frail, and small,
Was an earthen vessel lying,
That seemed of no use at all."

III.

But the Master saw and raised it
From the dust in which lay ;
And smiled as He gently whispered :
“ My work it shall do to-day.
It is but an earthen vessel,
But close it is lying to me ;
It is small, but clean, and empty,
That is all it needs to be.”

IV.

So forth to the fountain He bore it,
And filled it full to the brim :
How glad was the earthen vessel
To be of some use to Him !
He poured forth the living water
All over His lilies so fair,
Till empty was the vessel,
And again He filled it there.

V.

The drooping lilies He watered,
Till all reviving again,
The Master saw with pleasure,
His labor had not been in vain :
His own hand drew the water,
Refreshing the thirsty flowers,
But He used the earthen vessel
To convey the living showers.

VI.

And then to itself it whispered,
As aside He laid it once more,
I still will lie in His pathway,
Just where I did before ;
For close would I keep to the Master,
And empty would I remain.
Perchance some day He may use me
To water His flowers again.

At the close of the reading, I said, “ I am that ‘ earthen vessel ’ that was of no use at all ; but I am going to

keep close to the Master, that he may use me." And so, dear ones, I have tried to comfort others, and in doing so, I myself have been comforted. Nothing seems to bring such sweet peace to my soul as trying to help others.

There are two things that most deeply impress me.

First—There are lilies in the Lord's garden, many of them drooping ones, that need to be watered. I believe the Master has a full supply.

Second—I feel I am one of the Lord's "earthen vessels," through which this precious treasure is to be carried to sad and aching hearts.

I can only bless others when I go to the Fountain and He himself shall

" Use the earthen vessel,
To convey the living showers."

There is now no work so congenial to my chastened heart as this: To visit the bedside of the sick and dying; to go to the homes of the poor and sorrowing; to point such to the only Hope, the Refuge, for those who have failed to find it in this world. To whisper in their ears, "Come unto me all ye that are *weary* and *heavy laden*, and I will give you *Rest*."

Already there has come to my ears from dying lips these words, "You led me to Christ. I shall watch for your coming, and will gladly welcome you there."

These assurances, while they have humbled me, have been an inspiration and a new girding to my heart. In these paths "He leadeth me." Henceforth, I am to know nothing among men, save "Jesus Christ and Him crucified!"

" Happy, if with my latest breath,
I may but gasp His name ;
Preach Him to *all*, and cry in death,
Behold ! Behold the Lamb."

TESTIMONIALS.

The following testimonials are from those who are personally acquainted with Mrs. Mary E. Burns, the Author of this book, and take pleasure in giving testimony to her Christian Character, and work.

From the Rev. Francis C. Hill of the New York East Conference of the M. E. Church :

"A Vision, and a Voice from Two Worlds" is a little Booklet written by Mrs. Mary E. Burns. Being her Pastor in Johnson St. M. E. Church, Brooklyn, for three years, we came to know some of the sad experiences of Sister Burns, as herein related. We remember the days of her Sorrow for Sin. We were present on that memorable occasion, when she entered into the liberty of of the children of God, and received her on probation, and into full membership in the Church of Christ. That initial experience was deep, sound, and real, and during the three years we were her pastor, we ever found her the same earnest, devoted Child of God, and efficient worker in the Lord's Vineyard.

The death of her son to which reference is made, was indeed a painful bereavement. We recall a time when he, but a child, was seriously ill, and we were summoned to administer the rite of baptism, it was thought by friends he was dying. "You must do it quickly said the physician." Omitting much of the form prescribed, we baptized him. Strangely, from that hour he became convalescent, and was soon restored to health. His death occurring in young manhood, removed her last and only child. No wonder a mother's heart clung so closely to him.

To prepare her for so great a trial, there was appointed the strange, and singular experience herein recorded. In sickness and bodily distress, there came visions of the unseen. The

curtain that hides the spirit world, seemed to be drawn aside, and she heard the songs of the redeemed, and beheld their glory, also the agonies, and the wailings of the lost.

Since that "Revelation," made to her, she has by a new devotion, and consecration, given herself more fully to God, and his service, and no employment seems to afford her so much pleasure as when engaged in helping some poor struggling soul into the kingdom, and when visiting the homes of destitution and want, to relieve them by all means in her power. In sending forth this little book, she has been compelled by necessity, laid upon her. It is the fulfilment of a sacred promise made to the voice she believes from the Lord, "Write the Vision and make it plain, that he who runs may read." We trust a blessing to thousands may follow its reading.

HUNTINGTON, L. I.,

FRANCIS C. HILL.

June, 13th, 1895.

From the Rev. R. H. Bosworth, Pastor of the Mayflower branch of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn :

Sister Burns has for some time been a labourer in the Sunday School connected with my charge. It has been my delight, and comfort, to witness the earnest spirit of service and devotion which she has displayed. She has been severely tried, as her testimony shows ; but throughout, all her faith has triumphed.

May this chapter of her christian experience, prove an inspiration to many, to hearken to the Divine voices that sound within them, promptly responding to each call to service "Here am I, Lord send me."

R. H. BOSWORTH.

MORRIS, OTSEGO CO., N. Y., May 9, 1895.

My Dear Sister Burns :

It gives me pleasure to learn that you intend to publish, in book form, the article entitled: "A Vision and a Voice from Two Worlds," which you read to me in part. I think when I was your pastor, and the pastor of the old Johnson Street Methodist Episcopal Church : To the worldly minded it may not perhaps prove so attractive as it should be, yet to the Christian I am quite sure that it must be helpful, a means of grace on account of what I know to be its spiritual influence.

I shall remember you always, my dear Sister, as an earnest, active, devoted, and consistent follower of the blessed Master, and as one who greatly aided me and encouraged me in my pastorate of three years, by the faithfulness of your attendance upon *all* the means of grace, and also, by your unceasing activity in "well doing," both by word and deed.

Wishing you the utmost success in the disposal of your publications, and asking you to kindly forward me a copy of your book by mail as soon as published,

I remain, my dear Sister,

Very sincerely yours,

THOS. D. LITTLEWOOD, A. M.

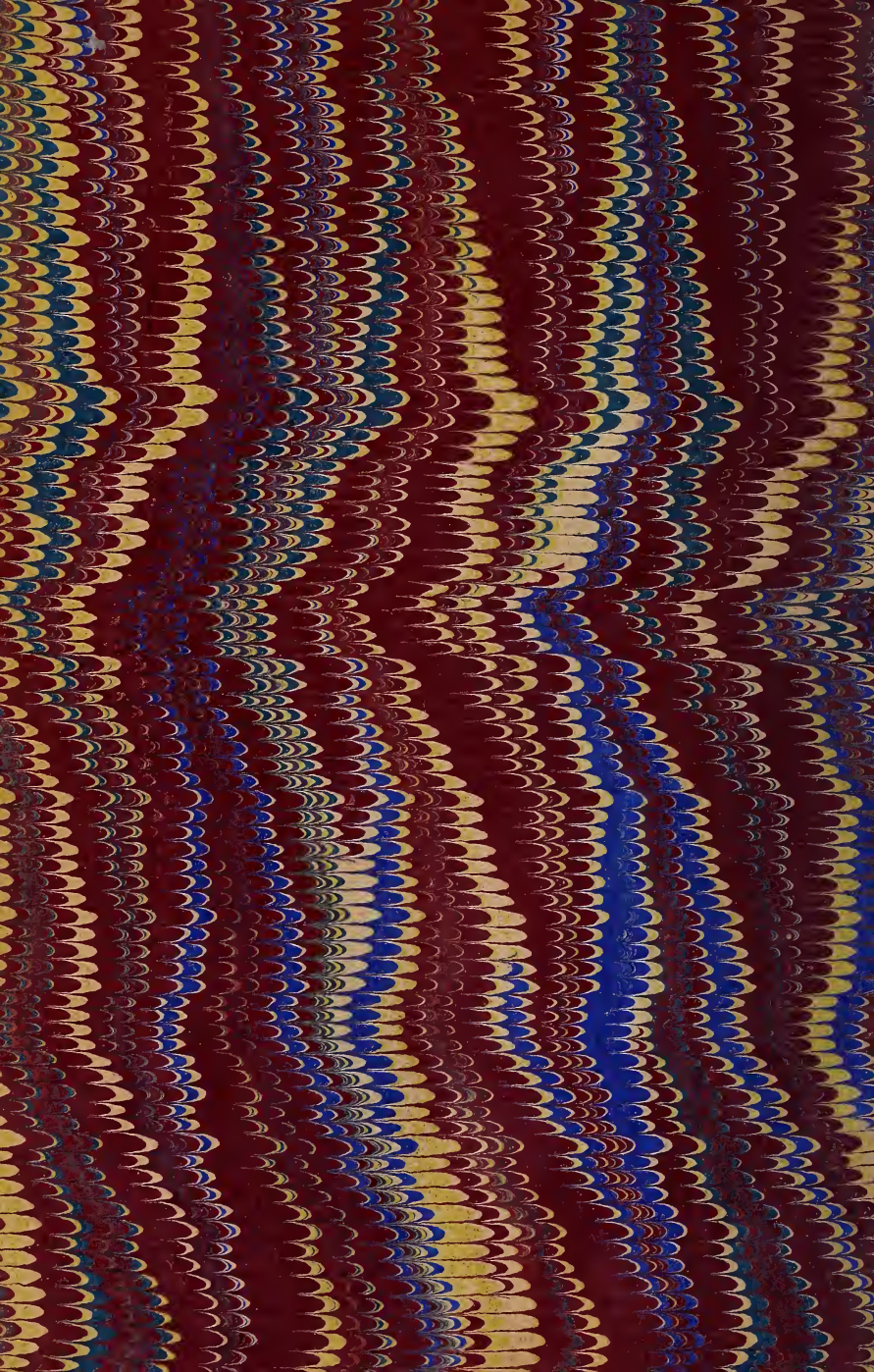
From the Rev. E. E. Knapp, Pastor of the Central Baptist Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Burns has been known to me for several years as an earnest Christian, laboring among the sorrowing and distressed, always with a good word for Jesus ; and I am sure her story, in its corroboration of Scripture, truth, and lifting up of our Lord Jesus Christ, will be read with interest and profit by every lover of our Lord, who may receive a copy.

Cordially,

E. E. KNAPP.

June, 1895.



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